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Wednesday, 10 January 2018, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Umarov	(Kazakhstan)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. French

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/1113)

Assessment by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of phase one of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2018/12)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/1113)

Assessment by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of phase one of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2018/12)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/1113, which contains the text of the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and document S/2018/12, which contains the text of the assessment by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of phase one of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

Mr. Lacroix: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur.

Six months after the adoption of resolution 2363 (2017) on the two-phase reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), I am honoured to bring to the attention of Council members the joint assessment of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission of the Mission's phase one reconfiguration, as submitted in the joint report (S/2018/12), in line with paragraph 6 of the resolution. I shall also touch upon recent development in Darfur in the context of the latest 60-day report of the Secretary-General on UNAMID (S/2017/1113), issued on 27 December 2017.

In June last year, in acknowledgement of the overall improvement of the security situation in Darfur, the Security Council endorsed the recommendations of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in their special report of 18 May 2017 (S/2017/437) for a two-pronged approach, with a focus on protection in the Jebel Marra area and on stabilizing the situation in other areas of Darfur. In the same context, the Security Council authorized a reduction of the Mission's uniformed and civilian personnel in two phases, including the handing-over of 11 UNAMID team sites to the Government of the Sudan, while requesting a written assessment by 1 January 2018 of the first six months of the reconfiguration. The assessment was conducted by a joint African Union-United Nations team, with representation from the United Nations and humanitarian country teams, which visited Khartoum and Darfur from 7 to 17 November 2017.

Allow me to briefly introduce the main findings of the assessment. The conflict trends indicated in the special report of 18 May 2017 continue, since, following the military victory against the rebel movements, the Government of the Sudan is firmly consolidating its control and State authority across Darfur, except for the pockets in the Jebel Marra area controlled by a fragmented and weakened Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid, with the other rebel groups having been engaged in mercenary and criminal activities in neighbouring countries. In Darfur, the deployment of the Rapid Support Forces and the execution of the weapons-collection campaign have increased the Government's capability to respond swiftly to security challenges. The developments have also created new dynamics by bringing the different groups under the authority of the Rapid Support Forces, including, recently, the border guards of Musa Hilal, and by gradually creating the conditions for new political realities.

Without major incidents overall, the disarmament campaign has been received with mixed reactions and scepticism, particularly by the communities of internally displaced persons (IDPs), while the local authorities and tribal leaders believe that it has increased security among the communities. UNAMID is engaging the authorities on reported concerns over

non-respect for the rule of law and violations of human rights associated with the campaign, while monitoring its execution in the IDP camps, including the Kalma camp. In the meantime, progress towards achieving a negotiated political settlement to the conflict remains elusive.

Thus far, the humanitarian indicators illustrate a continuing emergency situation, with 2.7 million people displaced, of whom 2.1 million across Darfur are in need of assistance, and 1.6 million people living in various camps and settlements. While no additional displacements occurred during the assessment period and some voluntary returns have taken place, including the recent repatriation of Sudanese refugees from the Central African Republic to South Darfur, the lack of security, basic services and sustainable livelihoods in the areas of return, as well as issues related to land ownership, have become major impediments to return.

Phase one of the reconfiguration of UNAMID was completed before the deadline of 31 December 2017, with 11 team sites closed and handed over to the Darfur state government by the end of October. The military component currently stands at 11,461, against an authorized strength of 11,395 at the end of phase one; the police component at 2,666, against an authorized strength of 2,888; and the number of civilian staff positions has been reduced by 558 following the conduct of a civilian staffing review. In the context of the two-pronged approach of the Operation, the mission recently formalized the concept of the Jebel Marra task force, and will activate it in the second half of January, while, on 7 January, the Government reported having allocated land for the Golo team site, although details on the actual establishment of the site are yet to be agreed. The mission is currently working on the state-specific stabilization plans in cooperation with the Darfur state Government and the United Nations country team.

During phase one of the reconfiguration, the Government of the Sudan has been very cooperative in facilitating the repatriation of contingents and the timely closure and handover of team sites. The overall operating environment for the movement of humanitarian personnel across Darfur has been reliable. However, the Mission is facing some difficulties in obtaining visas for international staff, in particular those working on human rights.

The assessment in Darfur was undertaken within a few weeks of the closure of team sites, which allowed for only a preliminary analysis of the impact of the UNAMID reconfiguration. While no serious adverse impact was noted during the field mission and the subsequent weeks, it is clear that it is too early to draw a definite conclusion with regard to the consequences of the closure of team sites for the population. In the period ahead, we will continue to keep the Council informed of any emerging issues.

The developments covered by the Secretary-General's progress report reaffirmed the trends outlined above. While the reporting period did not witness any armed clashes between Government forces and the Darfur armed movements, the initiation of the forceful stage of the weapons collection campaign across Darfur and its launching in the IDP camps constituted its key features. In addition, the start of the migration season continued to generate violence among communities, although at a lower level than in previous years. No tangible progress was noted in the Darfur political process or in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

In conclusion, I would like to bring two issues to the attention of the Council. First, as the Mission moves towards the implementation of phase two of the reconfiguration, provided that the current trends continue, I recommend, for the Council's deliberation, that a review take place to consider a new mission concept with adjusted priorities in the context of the renewal of the UNAMID mandate in June. Secondly, funding for the consolidation of peacebuilding efforts in Darfur should be treated by Member States as a political issue of high priority in order to protect the investments made to date in peace and to avoid a relapse into conflict.

The President: I thank Mr. Lacroix for his briefing.

I now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his briefing, which, as usual, has been very useful. We also thank the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General for their assessment report (S/2018/12) on phase one of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

We are very encouraged that the security situation in Darfur continues to show marked progress and that

the Government is consolidating State authority across Darfur. We commend the Government for extending the unilateral ceasefire and for the fact that there has been no fighting with one of the rebel groups since around the beginning of 2015 and with a second rebel group since the beginning of 2016. Humanitarian access has continued to improve in Darfur and the operating environment for the movement of humanitarian personnel across Darfur has been reliable and open since December 2016.

We are particularly pleased to learn that the weapons-collection campaign launched by the Government is helping to consolidate the prevailing relative peace and stability in Darfur, including its contribution to the significant decrease in intercommunal conflicts, especially given the valid concerns raised during the launch of the campaign. It is also encouraging to note that the collection process has been without incident in the internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps and that an agreement has been reached to establish a trilateral committee, with the participation of UNAMID, the Government and representatives of IDPs, to conduct the collection of weapons in Kalma camp. It is our hope that the weapons campaign will contribute to further reducing the level of armed violence and to improving the conditions necessary for the return of IDPs to their original homes.

Although we are pleased that no new displacements occurred in the reporting period, the high number of IDPs remains one of the greatest challenges to the 10 months of sustainable peace in Darfur. However, the Government has limited capacity to fully address that enormous challenge and therefore needs the support of the international community.

Of course, we are disappointed that progress towards achieving a negotiated political settlement has remained difficult so far. As the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) explained in its final report (see S/2017/1125), the core problem is the unrealistic expectations of the rebel groups. It is difficult to assume that the rebel groups are ready to engage with the Government in good faith or, indeed, to consider the interests of the people a priority. What their acts show is that they have been involved in criminal activities, including in Libya and South Sudan. As the report of the Secretary-General indicates, and as Under-Secretary-General Lacroix just stressed, whatever rebel activities there may be are limited to pockets of Jebel Marra and have descended to involvement in acts of banditry. That is why we are reiterating our call to the Council to put pressure on the rebel groups to participate meaningfully in the peace process or face the consequences.

We are also concerned about the slow progress of the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. As the Secretary-General has said, the Doha Document represents a comprehensive framework for a political solution, and we urge all armed groups to lay down their weapons and join it without delay. We are encouraged by the Government's expressed commitment to the Doha Document's implementation and the recent action that has been taken in that direction. It must be understood that the Government is making these efforts in spite of the difficult regional security dynamics and the hostile actions of other external actors, aimed at fomenting more trouble in the Sudan and the region by supporting some of the armed opposition groups, as is highlighted in the report of the Panel of Experts (S/2017/1125).

We are also pleased to note the successful completion of phase 1 of the drawdown and reconfiguration of UNAMID, and the Government's commendable cooperation in that regard. Furthermore, we are pleased that no serious adverse impact has been noted following the closure of team sites as part of the reconfiguration process. We believe that the situation in Darfur is conducive to proceeding to phase 2. This time, a great deal of emphasis should be placed on peacebuilding efforts, and that is the universal request being made to the assessment team — for development projects to support peace in Darfur. That will require enhancing the financial and human resources of the United Nations country team.

It will also be very important not to overlook the humanitarian challenges in the region. The report shows that the number of refugees entering Darfur from South Sudan now totals 192,826, with 89,000 of those having arrived in 2017 alone. The Sudan obviously need support for this, including considering the fact that it has also been contributing to peace and stability in the region, as can be seen from President Salva Kiir's visit to the Sudan on 1 and 2 November and President Al-Bashir's visits to Uganda on 13 and 14 October and Chad on 1 and 2 December. In that context, we support the efforts of UNAMID and the United Nations country team to develop a joint fund-raising strategy for implementing the Integrated Strategic Framework for Darfur for the period from 2017 to

2019. The international community should also provide all necessary support to the peacebuilding efforts in Darfur. We appreciate the fact that the Government has allocated land for a temporary operating base for the Jebel Marra task force in Golo. That will no doubt greatly facilitate UNAMID's anticipated traditional peacekeeping role in the Jebel Marra area.

Lastly, we support the outcome of the assessment and recommendations made by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General regarding the way forward. We look forward to the conduct of the joint review by the African Union and the United Nations, in close consultation with the Government, before the renewal of UNAMID's mandate in June.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his report (S/2017/1113), and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for his briefing on the various aspects of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

We consider Darfur's progress towards stability a positive development. The arms-collection campaign has resulted in a decrease in violence in recent months, and we encourage the Government to continue those efforts in line with the provisions of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, backed by the necessary political support. However, we note with concern that violations of human rights continue. We would like to remind the Sudanese authorities of their responsibility to protect the civilian population, particularly women, children and internally displaced persons in vulnerable circumstances. It will be very important to strengthen the capacity of the police and the judiciary to prosecute and punish those responsible for atrocity crimes. With regard to the evaluation of the UNAMID reconfiguration and drawdown process, we would like to highlight three issues that require urgent attention.

First, the speed with which phase 1 of the process has been carried out has to some extent limited the ability to plan and implement the reconfiguration process adequately. It will be crucial to ensure that phase 2 is conducted in a more organized and coordinated way among the teams involved. Peru supports the recommendation to postpone the delivery of the Kalma base until the end of phase 2 of the reconfiguration process, so that the process can be carried out as safely and peacefully as possible. We are also concerned about the delays in establishing a temporary base in Golo. We believe that will be key to enabling UNAMID to make progress with the peacekeeping process and focus its resources and activities on sustainable development in Darfur with a view to addressing the root causes of the conflict. We consider it urgent and vital to address the problems preventing humanitarian aid from reaching its recipients. We acknowledge the fact that improvements have been made in the process of issuing visas, improvements that should also be extended to humanitarian personnel. But it will be equally important to eliminate bureaucratic obstacles to the entry of containers into the country.

In our view, sustaining peace in Darfur means achieving a permanent ceasefire and addressing the root causes of the conflict. In that regard, we welcome UNAMID and the United Nations country team's initiative in implementing the Integrated Strategic Framework for the period 2017 to 2019. Donor contributions, including from non-conventional sources and regional financial institutions, should be solicited to ensure that it is adequately implemented.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his detailed briefing on the bimonthly report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1113), and the assessments by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General on the first phase of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of the issue, which have been chiefly in the security sector, as we also saw during the previous reporting period. The fact that have been no clashes between the Sudanese Government and the rebel groups in Darfur for a subsequent reporting period represents significant progress. In that regard, we welcome the Government's decision to extend the unilateral ceasefire to 31 March, creating an environment that will make it possible for the Government and UNAMID to focus their efforts on consolidating peace in Darfur and on the political process, by addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, such as land-ownership issues, and promoting development in that area.

Another aspect we would like to emphasize is the progress that has been made with the weapons-collection campaign promoted by the Government. Its success is essential to improving security in local communities and building a stable and sustainable peace. We should prevent any possible disputes and foster commitment to the process on the part both of civilians and militias. This Government-initiated process aligns with UNAMID's peacebuilding efforts and needs committed support from the international community.

On the humanitarian front, it is clear that the improved security conditions have prevented any further displacement of civilians. While that is a positive, however, the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is still worrying, and no significant improvements have been made despite the efforts of the Government, agencies and humanitarian workers. It is urgent that the international community support the development of projects that will make it possible for IDPs to obtain access to basic services and improve their quality of life. We also express our thanks for the work that is being done by the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and other humanitarian actors.

We would highlight the fact that new cases of obstruction to humanitarian access have been reported. However, access has been provided to people in Jebel Marra, which reflects the good relationship between and the joint work done by the Government and the various relevant agencies. In addition, although the number of cases of human rights violations and other types of crimes has declined compared with the previous period, we must redouble our efforts to put an end to cases of illegal detentions and violence against women and children, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, and promote access of women to justice.

Bolivia believes that one of the main challenges facing Sudan at the moment is the revitalization of the political process. We welcome the work of the Government to promote the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and stress that the only possible solution to the crisis in the area is a political process that will make it possible to resolve the outstanding issues between the parties, primarily disputes with regard to land ownership. Conflicts between communities, the disarmament of the civilian population and militias, and a permanent ceasefire, inter alia, are issues that must be addressed.

We believe that the differences that exist with regard to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur must be resolved, and we encourage those parties that have not yet signed on to it to engage in a consultative dialogue with the Government. We also welcome the good offices of the Special Representative, Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, and members of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

Finally, we believe that in order to make progress in development and to consolidate a stable peace in Darfur, the Sudan needs the United Nations to work together with the African Union and the international community in general. We also commend the progress that has been made in the process of reconfiguring UNAMID, and we believe that we must strengthen the capacities of the United Nations country team in order to move on to the second phase and ensure a successful drawdown of the Mission. We thank UNAMID for its efforts and dedication to peacebuilding in Darfur.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to start by expressing my gratitude to Mr. Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2017/1113). The report sheds a great deal of light on the current situation in Darfur. We noted therein some positive developments, which were made possible by the joint efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and the Sudanese Government.

We note with satisfaction the positive results of the joint efforts of the Sudanese Government, as reflected in the fact that the number of clashes between the Government and rebel groups in Darfur has dropped significantly. This improved atmosphere makes it possible to focus the efforts of all the parties on the political process, which should lead to the achievement of a lasting peace. We would also like to highlight the Government of the Sudan's commitment to promoting the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

Equatorial Guinea has always believed that the conflict in Darfur must be resolved through a political process that makes it possible to deal with the most controversial issues, including the issue of land ownership, conflicts between communities and the disarmament of the civilian population and militias. All the movements involved in this process must work

hard to achieve peace with the Government through a process of negotiations that is frank and inclusive. We therefore urge the Sudanese Government to continue working closely with UNAMID, which would be a way of ensuring the success of the Operation and would help the State re-establish its authority throughout the territory.

We also welcome the fact that the movement of UNAMID and humanitarian personnel has improved, which was made possible by a reduction in the level of violence. That is a very significant step forward.

We, too, urge the international community, at this very decisive moment, to strongly support the Sudan so as to consolidate the positive developments that we heard about in Mr. Lacroix's report and to help resolve the issues that require attention.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his high-quality presentation to the Council, which has helped us to understand the most recent developments in the region of the Sudan.

In our statement today, Côte d'Ivoire would like to focus on two key points: the peace process in Darfur and the status of implementation of the recommendations emanating from the report on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2017/437), as dealt with in the joint review of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, in particular the implementation of phase one of the reconfiguration of UNAMID.

Although my delegation welcomes the improvement in the security situation, characterized by a significant reduction in the number of clashes between the Sudanese Government and armed groups in Darfur, since the extension of the unilateral ceasefires by the protagonists and since the weapons-collection campaign, we nevertheless remain concerned at the fact that little progress has been made in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, which remains a useful political framework to address the root causes of the conflict and to give the people of Darfur the possibility of enjoying the dividends of peace.

Côte d'Ivoire fears that the current political deadlock will bring to nought the efforts made to date to find a way out of the crisis and that we will see a return to the previous situation, which caused the mass displacements of people that we are seeing once again today.

My delegation believes that peace in Darfur must include national reconciliation, a permanent cessation of hostilities and an inclusive political dialogue. We therefore call upon all of the parties involved to involve themselves in a genuine effort to restore peace, in the interests of the well-being of the people and the stability of the entire region.

With regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the strategic review, particularly with regard to phase one of the reconfiguration of UNAMID, my delegation would like to welcome the joint assessment of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

My delegation would like to stress two of the points listed in paragraph 6 of resolution 2363 (2017), of 29 June 2017, with regard to the joint assessment: the progress achieved in the implementation of phase one of the reconfiguration of the hybrid force and the cooperation of the Sudanese Government with UNAMID.

With regard to the first point, my delegation welcomes the fact that phase one is functioning well. It has resulted in the closure of 11 sites and the reduction in the number of military personnel to 11,395 from 15,845 and of police officers to 2,888 from 3,403. The Ivorian delegation welcomes the fact that the Sudanese Government has allocated sites to be used in the establishment of the Jebel Marra task force, which, in our view, is a way to build capacity in UNAMID as it carries out peacebuilding activities in the Sudan.

With regard to the second point, in a spirit of constructive cooperation, my delegation would like to invite the Government of the Sudan to allow UNAMID's troops to move freely, in accordance with its mandate, and facilitate the administrative procedures required to conduct its activities.

Mr. Almunayekh (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Lacroix, to the Security Council and thank him for his detailed briefing on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1113) on phase one of the reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). In addition, I welcome the encouraging developments outlined in the report, in particular with regard to the reduction in the number of clashes and levels of violence

during the reporting period. We believe that phase one is vital to achieving stability in Darfur.

We welcome the fact that the Government of the Sudan has accepted the conclusions of the joint assessment and allocated land for the establishment of a temporary operating base in Golo. Furthermore, we welcome the efforts of the Sudanese Government to stabilize Darfur, in particular with regard to the return of refugees, the collection of weapons and the national dialogue. We support the national dialogue process and the efforts of the African Union's High-level Implementation Panel. We welcome the efforts of UNAMID, in cooperation with local forces in Darfur, to facilitate the transition to the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. We reiterate the importance of supporting the Sudan in its efforts.

The positive role played by friends of the Sudan in implementing development projects in Darfur facilitates the voluntary return of displaced persons and helps to provide them with a decent life. In that regard, I reiterate the importance of reaching a political solution in Darfur and of ensuring that all stakeholders participate in a peaceful political process.

It is important to end arms proliferation in Darfur. I welcome the cooperation between UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan with regard to the collection of weapons in certain refugee camps. In addition, I reiterate the importance of respecting the sovereignty, unity and independence of the Sudan. I note the attacks perpetrated by militia groups in the Sudan that destabilize the country and the wider region. We reiterate our support for the Government of the Sudan in its efforts to overcome challenges and meet the demands of the United Nations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Kazakhstan.

We join others in expressing our deep appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his comprehensive briefing.

My delegation supports the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/1113) on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as well as the joint assessment of the progress of UNAMID's reconfiguration, and would like to offer the following observations.

Kazakhstan is encouraged by the continuing progress made on the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, as well as by enhanced cooperation among the Sudanese Government, the United Nations and the African Union (AU). The most recent proof of such cooperation is the Government's consent to establish the operating base in Golo. We also welcome the decision of the Government of the Sudan to extend the unilateral ceasefire until the end of March. We hope that the other parties will also undertake the efforts necessary to invigorate an inclusive political process led by the AU High-level Implementation Panel. Gradually, we must move towards fulfilling the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

Kazakhstan is also pleased to note that no adverse effects have been observed during phase one of UNAMID's reconfiguration. We believe that, during its mandate renewal in June, UNAMID's duties should be adjusted towards prioritizing its peacebuilding capacities. Peacebuilding efforts should focus on the implementation of the UNAMID United Nations country team's Integrated Strategic Framework for Darfur for 2017-2019, which identifies the priorities for sustainable peace in Darfur. At the same time, the Government of the Sudan needs international support, including expertise and financial assistance to resolve the plight of internally displaced persons and succeed in the arms collection campaign. That effort should also be accompanied by investment in development projects.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month.

I also welcome the new non-permanent members of the Council and wish them every success in their efforts. I assure them of our cooperation in the Security Council with regard to the situation in the Sudan by sharing all information with them.

I thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/1113), which is before the Council. I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Lacroix, for his comprehensive briefing, from which we greatly benefited. I would like also like to greet from afar the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Commission itself for their efforts, and thank them for their ongoing support to the Sudan.

We have considered the report before the Council on the implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. It is a periodic report that is submitted every 60 days as an assessment of the situation in Darfur. The Council has perhaps noted that such reports seem to contain nothing new. We believe that the Secretariat examines only minor incidents and misdemeanors documented in police stations. We believe this practice reveals shortcomings in preparing the reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council.

I would refer to paragraphs in the report that outline the situation and the conflict in Darfur, listing minor incidents that could occur even in the safest and most secure cities. It appears that the authors of the report have prepared it based on incidents reported to police departments. This fully reaffirms what we have been repeating and confirming, which is even confirmed in those reports, to the effect that the situation in Darfur is now normal, safe and just like many other areas and cities throughout the world.

In that regard, I recall that we warned against that situation when UNAMID's mandate was renewed in June 2017 (see S/PV.7989), saying that shortening the length of the reporting periods could result in weakening the reports submitted to the Council. We said that it would be preferable to increase it or maintain a 90-day reporting period.

The adoption of resolution 2363 (2017), which calls for the gradual withdrawal of UNAMID and a reconfiguration of the Mission, has brought Darfur to a new phase of peacebuilding and the consolidation of achievements in the areas of peace, security and stability in all areas of the state, with the exception of a small pocket in Jebel Marra. The resolution has validated the calls that have been made by the Sudanese Government since 2015 for the Mission to adapt to developments in Darfur that changed the nature of the conflict that was fought there.

In that regard, all that remains of the crisis in Darfur are its consequences for development and displaced persons, which are directly linked to the peacebuilding agenda. We see it as high time that the United Nations and the international community work to support the Sudanese Government in addressing those challenges once and for all. Similarly, we are grateful for the tireless efforts of Qatar, the sponsor of the Doha peace process, and other friendly States in providing assistance in rebuilding and the voluntary return to villages and making basic services available, which has encouraged displaced persons to return to their homes and normal lives.

Furthermore, a number of representatives in the Council have spoken about the Doha agreement. The essence of the agreement has brought us to this stage because 85 per cent of it has now been implemented. I should also like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that the Implementation Follow-up Commission for Peace in Darfur was established under the Doha agreement and includes the five permanent members of the Security Council. It meets in Khartoum and Doha every six months, in rotation, to assess and analyse developments in Darfur. We call on Council members to consult its reports so as to see the implementation of the Doha agreement, which was overseen by the League of Arab States, the United Nations, the African Union and other peace partners.

With all due respect, I therefore have to say that I cannot accept two statements made by Council members, calling for the need for a peace process. We believe that the Doha Document offers the constitutional foundation for the peace operation. To substantiate that, I need only cite the changes in size that the Mission has undergone on the ground and the provisions of resolution 2363 (2017), adopted on 29 June last year.

The Sudanese Government, supported by the will of the people of Darfur, is working to consolidate and sustain peace by implementing projects that assist in this regard, the most important of which is the weapons-collection campaign, because the reasons for keeping weapons no longer exist. Overall, the report indicates that the campaign has had outstanding results despite a lack of resources and capacities, but the real and sincere willingness to see it through has contributed to its success and completion. As we have said in previous statements, weapons collection is an absolute prerequisite for sustaining peace and security. The Sudanese Government has therefore spared no effort to ensure the completion of the campaign and collect weapons from civilians so that members of the armed forces are the only ones to carry them and to police all those who fail to respect laws that apply to bearing and acquiring weapons.

We reaffirm that the success of that campaign depends on firm respect for the law without exception — a precept that we have followed consistently. Furthermore,

we stress the importance of cooperation with UNAMID and of meetings and consultations with the Joint African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur. It is worth noting that the Vice President of the Sudan, the resident representative of the African Union and the United Nations will meet in Darfur shortly. The Vice President of the Sudan has said that the Sudan is ready to fully leave the process to and allow UNAMID to address it if the Mission is committed to carrying out the weapons-collection campaign. This is where we can be flexible with regard to that issue, but we must address weapons collection because the proliferation of arms in any conflict zone will result in the persistence of challenges and emergency special operations that will be launched automatically.

My country welcomes the steps taken by UNAMID in the context of implementing the recommendations contained in resolution 2363 (2017). In that regard, 11 sites have been closed during the first phase of reconfiguration. We look forward to the start of the second phase of the Mission's downsizing, pursuant to resolution 2363 (2017). Accordingly, I reaffirm that the Sudanese Government will continue to cooperate with UNAMID towards the fulfilment of its mandate, including the closure of the remaining sites during the second phase. We agree that such cooperation is very important. Various reports, including the one before us, have highlighted that cooperation, in particular with regard to authorizing customs clearance for containers, visas, freedom of movement, and granting access to the Mission and humanitarian partners.

Furthermore, we have also approved the Mission's request to establish a temporary operating base in the Golo region. In that spirit, the Sudanese Government has allocated a 5,620-square metre parcel of land in Jebel Marra for the temporary operating base in Golo. We call on UNAMID and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to reconsider the construction of a ground route connecting Zalingei, Golo and Rokiro, which would be of great benefit to the population of that region. The construction of the military airport in Golo will not have the same beneficial impact as would such a ground route, which would permit access to the region and provide services to Darfur. The Governor of Darfur has submitted our plans to UNAMID.

In conclusion, we welcome the ongoing tireless and complementary efforts aimed at completing the peace process, and we welcome once again the dawn of peace, which will bring development that will end the conflict once and for all. The delegation of my country thanks UNAMID for its work in various areas. We also thank police- and troop-contributing countries and reiterate our willingness to cooperate with all regional and international partners in connection with UNAMID so that it can finally leave the Sudan.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.